

5 What is claimed is:

1. A cheese-based preparation comprising:
20 to 40% by weight lactose,
 0 to 30% by weight skim milk powder,
10 10 to 70% by weight cocoa replacement fat,
 5 to 70% by weight cheese powder,
 0 to 4% by weight salt, and
 0 to 3% by weight emulsifier.
- 15 2. The cheese-based preparation according to claim 1,
 wherein the cheese powder is selected from Gouda, Cheddar, and
 Emmentaler powder.
- 20 3. The cheese-based preparation according to claims 1
 or 2, wherein skim milk powder is contained in an amount of 10
 to 15% by weight.
- 25 4. The cheese-based preparation according to claim 3,
 wherein cocoa replacement fat is contained in an amount of 20
 to 40% by weight.
- 30 5. The cheese-based preparation according to claim 4,
 wherein cheese powder is contained in an amount of 10 to 30%
 by weight.
- 35 6. The cheese-based preparation according to claim 5,
 wherein salt is contained in an amount of 0.5 to 1.5% by
 weight.
7. The cheese-based preparation according to claim 6,
 wherein an emulsifier is contained in an amount of 0.5 to 1.5%
 by weight.
- 40 8. Process for manufacturing a cheese-based preparation
 comprising the steps of:

5 (1) mixing lactose with part of the molten cocoa replacement fat and refining the mixture to a particle size of 12 to 24 μm ;

 (2) refining cheese powder and optionally skim milk powder, salt and/or emulsifier in a separate batch to a
10 particle size of 12 to 24 μm ;

 (3) combining the refined powders obtained in steps 1 and 2 and exposing the mixture to a high shear treatment, whilst adding another part of the molten cacao replacement fat to obtain a high viscous structure;

15 (4) adding the residual molten cocoa replacement fat, to obtain a liquid product;

 (5) tempering the product at a temperature lower than 50°C.

20 9. The process according to claim 8, wherein the refining in steps 1 and 2 is carried out using a roll refiner having 2 to 5 rolls under a pressure of 0.2 to 3.5 Mpa and a temperature of the roll surfaces of 0 to 35°C.

25 10. The process according to claim 9, wherein the roll refiner has 3 to 5 rolls.

 11. The process according to 9 or 10, wherein the pressure is 0.5 to 2.5 Mpa.

30 12. The process according to claim 11, wherein the temperature of the rolls surface is 10 to 25°C.